

## MEMORIES OF "THE WHITE HOUSE, DANEHIL"

by

ALBERTA JAMES.

This illustration below of the "White House" is copied from an old picture postcard. The house, one of the oldest in our parish (part dating from 1450)<sup>1</sup>, has been recently most sympathetically restored and put in order. (HMR).

Alberta James writes "My first memory of "The White House" was going to the dancing classes in the Barn behind the house. Miss Sutton of the "Sutton School of Dancing" came every fortnight to teach ballroom and tap dancing for one shilling a lesson. The Misses Bruce were living in the house then and the Barn was in constant use by the Choral Society and for jumble sales, welfare etc.

In February 1932 Mr Street took over the butcher's shop in the little building on the north end of the



house. We children loved going there, he had a wonderful brass lamp with a huge white shade hanging from the ceiling, you could see it swing when the door was open. There was thick sawdust on the floor to make tracks in, and he made the most delicious sausages. He was always telling us that his dream was to turn the village pond opposite<sup>2</sup> into a boating lake. We really believed him but sadly he never did manage it. We all loved him just the same.

Mr and Mrs Barnes Moss came to "The White House" in August 1931 and took over the Telephone Exchange which was already there. They turned the former grocer's shop into 7he Orange Tea Rooms"., small wooden tables were

dotted about and covered with orange-coloured cloths. Mrs Moss liked to have small paraffin lamps in odd corners. She made all her own cakes and scones in the oven of her paraffin stove.

In 1937 Mr Moss's telephonist left to better herself at Haywards Heath exchange and he asked my Dad if I would like the job. This was a foolish move on his part, because a flighty fourteen year old was not the best material for the job; especially with the village boys riding up and down the little road outside, right under his windows! Mr Moss was a very serious and upright gentleman. Thankfully, his former telephonist did not like Haywards Heath and came back - which was good luck for all of us.

I really enjoyed helping Mrs Moss in the tea rooms; sometimes we had a crowd of hikers or cyclists in, then it was a race to put the kettle on the primus\* and open all Mrs Moss's cake tins. Mrs Moss was very nice, she wore long dangling earrings and her fingers were loaded with rings. They both worked hard for the village and joined in most things".

\*A Primus stove is a paraffin fuelled stove that needs to be primed by preheating the jets with methylated spirit and pumping the paraffin into the hot jets to start ignition.

(1) See DPHS Vol 5 No 2 p 1-8. 'Why the Red Lion became The White House', by Hyida Rawlings.

(2) 'The village pond' was drained and became the car park for the Social Club".